Christian Community

A Program Service of the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y. and the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, 2969 West 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio

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UMT CAN BE DEFEATED

Universal Military Training and Service will become a fact if the report of the National Security Training Commission is approved by Congress. There is evidence that an effort will be made to push such approval through shortly after Congress reconvenes.

In urging that this program be defeated, the Commission on Christian Social Action draws a sharp distinction between drafting men for our military commitments under the United Nations during the present emergency and adopting a permanent policy of subjecting all our youth to military indoctrination and service, regardless of the objective international situation.

The time, however, is short. Church members should lose no time in pointing out to their Representatives and Senators, by personal conference or letter, the implications of UMT as a permanent policy in a nation which is committed to work, against whatever odds, for "fool-proof disarmament" and peace.

Copies of the NSTC report, entitled *Universal Military Training: Foundation of Enduring National Strength,* may be secured from the U. S. Government Printing Office at 35 cents each. A convenient 10-cent digest of arguments against UMT has been published under the title *Freedom's Future is in Your Hands* by the National Council Against Conscription, 1013 18th St., N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

"OF ONE BLOOD"

February 10th is Race Relations Sunday. Copies of the annual message of the National Council of Churches may be secured from the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations, 297 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y., at five cents each, or $2 per hundred. A worship packet, containing program materials for various age groups is available at 15 cents, or $10 per hundred.

Housing for All Without Discrimination

By Galen R. Weaver

We could probably get general agreement among you who read CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, that three values are highly esteemed by almost all Americans—

1. To earn a good wage or salary so as to have a sense of security and to be able to "keep up with the Joneses."

2. To get an education — perhaps principally for prestige and for its utility value in accomplishing the above.

3. To own and live in an attractive house with modern equipment throughout and in a good neighborhood.

These goals are sought by nearly everybody who has been born or raised in our American culture. They are sought for individuals by individuals—or perhaps for families.

The federal Public Housing Act of 1949 set up as the key national housing goal *the realization as soon as feasible of a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family,* whether through private enterprise or governmental assistance in one or another form or to a greater or lesser degree.

Good housing and a good family environment becomes a conscious goal for people as they receive more education and obtain greater financial security. Minority group persons in the United States have been demanding and availing themselves of more education and better wages or salaries. For our purpose here it doesn't much matter whether this has come about by fair employment legislation and its efficient administration, by sheer manpower shortages or by non-discriminatory practices of individual employers who desire to be just to all and/or to obtain the most reliable and efficient labor-force possible. Negro and certain other minority workers have more money to spend and are more and more disposed to buy houses with it. For some years this has been true of certain prosperous or even wealthy non-white individuals such as morticians, doctors, dentists, lawyers and real estate agents or brokers. Because their prosperity depended mainly if not exclusively on clients of the same race or nationality background, these "leading citizens" have tended to live in or near the racial ghetto. Only infrequently have they lived outside the wall of segregation.

Now, however, with greater income, more non-white minority people are desiring what all Americans want—"a good modern presentable house" for purchase or rent. Add to greater purchasing power the fact that the housing located in the racial ghettos is far deteriorated, in many cases beyond repair or reconstruction. In most of our major cities obsolescent single and multiple dwellings have not burned down, been demolished or kept in repair. Consequently in our older cities much housing is not fit for human use. All who can afford—or who are allowed to purchase or rent on the open market—are doing so.

Minority group families, particularly Afro- and Mexican-Americans, are usually not allowed to buy or rent a house on the open real estate market. Restrictive covenants are no longer enforceable in the courts but widespread tacit agreements among realtors, often aided and abetted by officers of loan institutes, sometimes reinforced by "neighborhood associations," endeavor to block non-whites and perhaps others from occupancy of preferred houses in the better neighborhoods.

However these impediments are being overcome in various ways. The fact is that literally thousands of Negro families are now moving each year into areas that were formerly homogeneously white in racial composition. Most of this is happening with a minor degree of opposition although there are unfortunately also cases of overt and even violent demonstrations as in Oak Park and in Cicero, Illinois. The former was made by one or a few individuals; the latter was by a mob that got out of control.

The prospect is for an acceleration of the trend away from tightly segregated

all-white neighborhoods. And this will certainly be to the great advantage of all Americans if mingling as neighbors and hence as fellow adult members in community organizations, and fellow pupils in schools and playmates on the streets and playgrounds, has the beneficial effects expected. We may be confident that prejudice and racial and religious tensions will be reduced and cooperation and mutual respect and goodwill enhanced. Also our reputation will be improved among nations who have been puzzled and offended by our racial discrimination practices. We have much to gain and nothing to lose except our fears and hates. Property values, for example, will not fall because non-white families move into preferred neighborhoods except under rather special conditions.*

Church members have more than most to gain. By aiding this trend towards giving access to decent housing in a favorable environment to all who desire to fulfill this normal American desire, we can lift from our consciences some of the feeling of guilt which we all have because of our support to a segregated and unequal society. We can also work for a church inclusive of many sorts of people, one that will develop normally out of daily relationships and can be related to the needs of children, youth and adults who live in the same community. Actually, of course, we are bound to discover that "these many sorts of people" are astonishingly alike—that their real differences turn out to be between individuals and not between "races". This is a very important insight to come by in a world like our own. A common or shared cultural experience is the determining factor. On this experience we can build a local community or a national community. As the area of shared experiences increases between peoples of various historical backgrounds we create the basis for a world community. Living together in one area of limited size is preparation for living agreeably together in One World.

Christians who want to make democracy work and who are desirous of reducing intergroup conflicts will hardly find a more promising field than housing at prices people can afford to pay and open to all without segregation or discrimination on the basis of race, national origin or religion.

* See on this point facts and interpretations ably set forth by Charles Abrams in reprint from The Appraisal Journal of July, 1951, entitled "The New Gresham's Law of Neighborhoods—Fact or Fiction"—may be had from Council for Social Action for 5c each.

Speaking of Books

THE MARK OF OPPRESSION, by Abram Kardiner and Lionel Ovesey, is the most significant psychodynamic study of the American Negro ever to appear on the public market. It is almost indispensable as a social compass for serious students of American society. Published by W. W. Norton in 1951, the work is well worth the $5 it sells for.

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FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM, by John Hope Franklin, is the most dependable history of American Negroes to appear since W. E. B. Dubois' *Black Folk Then and Now,* which was published in 1939. While E. Franklin Frazier's *Negroes in the U. S.* (1948) is a landmark in documentation and Maurice Davis's *The Negro in American Society* is an excellent current commentary, Franklin's work (Alfred A. Knopf, 1947, $5) combines the genius of both.

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THE NEGRO FAMILY IN THE U. S., by E. Franklin Frazier (Dryden Press, $5) treats Negro acculturization in the United States, beginning with the slave period and ending with the present day.

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ON BEING NEGRO IN AMERICA, by J. Saunders Redding (Bobbs Merrill, $3), is a brief, journalistic though reflective, autobiography. It points up sharply the frustration of some middle class Negro intellectuals on the receiving end of American prejudice.

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THEY CAME IN CHAINS (Lippincott, $3.50) is another Redding effort which depicts the rise of the American Negro from bondage to citizenship.

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BALANCE OF POWER: THE NEGRO VOTE, by Henry Lee Moon (Doubleday, 1948, $3) is the only authoritative book-length analysis of the political meaning of the Negro vote of which this reviewer is aware. It is indispensable for all students of social action and race relations.

J. P. R.

PARISHIONERS ARE PEOPLE. Under this title, the Department of Christian Social Relations of the Protestant Episcopal Church has published a series of four leaflets about human relationships in the parish, the relations of neighbors and friends, of associates in daily living. Its purpose is to provide insight into these relationships and to give facts which will enable the parish to measure its life and work against the personal needs of its own people as well as those of the total community.

The series is designed to be an eight session study, two sessions being devoted to each topic. The topics include children and youth; older persons; intergroup relations (economic, social, religious, and political); and the use of alcohol. There is a leader's guide which outlines plans for the course including field work assignments and suggestions for follow-up.

For copies of the one dollar packet write the National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 281 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.

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CATHOLIC SOCIAL THOUGHT, ITS APPROACH TO CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS, by Melvin J. Williams. The Ronald Press Company, N. Y. C. $5. The Associate Professor of Sociology of Florida State University, although himself a Protestant, has produced such an objective, unbiased treatment of Catholic Thought that a Roman Catholic, Paul H. Furfey, commends his "extraordinary lack of prejudice" in a foreword. The 434 pages of text and 123 pages of notes and indices are the work of a careful scholar who gathers into one volume the contributions of Catholics on all phases of Catholic social thinking. Part I is upon the "Backgrounds and Development of Catholic Social Thought"; Part II on "Catholic Contributions to Sociological Theory"; Part III, "Cultural and Historical Aspects of Contemporary Catholic Social Theory";

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International Relations Letter

December 10, 1951

The Lord and the Man of the West

The Man of the West cried unto the Lord, saying, "O Lord, change the hearts of the rulers of Russia, that they may cease to upset and molest us. Cleanse the thoughts of their hearts that they may see the error of their ways. Make them peaceable and cooperative. Exorcise from them the evil spirits of falsehood and suspicion. Help them to do justice, to love mercy and to seek thee, the only true God. Change their hearts, O Lord, for we are weary of tension and strife."

And the Lord answered the strong crying of the Man of the West. It came to pass that the chief ruler of the Russians journeyed to Paris and stood before the United Nations. And he lifted up his voice and said, "Men and brethren, the God whom I have denied hath put it into my heart to appear here before you and to confess that we have erred grievously. We have sought to coerce all men into following our ways. We have spurned the truth and enthroned the lie. We have run after false gods. We confess the error of our ways and we extend to you now the hand of friendship and cooperation. Henceforth, let us live together in peace. Let us cease from reviling and work with one another for the healing of the world. If you are willing to accept our repentance, let us turn from building arms to building homes. Let the long night of fear and suspicion come to an end. Let your people freely journey to our land, where the time of darkness and oppression shall end and a new day of freedom and justice begin."

And the representatives of the nations saw that the ruler of the Russians spoke in sincerity and in truth. His words were carried swiftly to the ends of the earth and there was great rejoicing.

And the Man of the West said unto the Lord, "Shall it be now that we can take our rest and live henceforth in quietness?" And the Lord took him by the hand and brought him to a high mountain. "Behold!" He said. And he saw before him all the kingdoms, lands, and peoples of the world. And the Lord spoke as with the voice of thunder. "Tell me," He said, "What thou seest?" And the Man answered:

"I see many millions who live in ignorance, knowing neither how to read nor to write. I see millions who cry for food and their cries are not answered. I see a multitude too great to be numbered who are sick and have no physician. I see in every land many who have no faith to give meaning to their lives. Some live in palaces and some in huts; some ride in splendor and some walk painfully with bare feet, but all alike are without faith for living.

"I see deep distrust between men of different faiths. I see heaped-up wealth and pitiful poverty. I see children, oh, so many, living in the slums of great cities. I see men with dark skins being scorned and persecuted by men with white skins. I see great streams of wealth issuing from lands whose people remain in poverty and ignorance."

And the Lord said unto the Man of the West, "Foolish one! Thou didst pray that the hearts of the Russians might be changed, thinking then to live quietly and in comfort. Thou hast seen! My people suffer hunger and injustice and thou didst pray only to be delivered from the scourge of the Russians! Everywhere men oppress one another, lifting themselves up in haughty pride, and thou didst pray only against the oppression and pride of the Russians! Thy prayer is answered. But thou shalt not live in quietness and comfort. Thinkest thou that I care only for thee and thy kinsmen? I have granted thee a day of grace, wherein the Russians shall not threaten or oppress. Take up now the burdens of my people! Lift up the downtrodden and oppressed! Seek justice for all men! For if the slaves are not freed, if the ignorant are not taught, if the hungry are not fed, if the sick are not healed, if the poor are not invited to the feast, if freedom is still denied to multitudes, if white men still deny the brotherhood of all men, then shall a new scourge arise out of the East. For I shall not rest nor grow weary until I have established justice in the earth."

February is designated as Month of Emphasis for the Council for Social Action in the Congregational Christian Churches. Urgent Demand is, therefore, being enclosed with this mailing of Christian Community for all Congregational Christian readers. Additional aids for pastors will accompany the February issue.

More on the Vatican Issue

The International Relations Committee of the C.S.A. has adopted a statement on the appointment of an ambassador to the Vatican. We think it says some things not much emphasized in other Protestant statements. Here it is:

"We believe that the action of the President in nominating an ambassador to the Vatican is a deplorable mistake. It is a mistake because the harm it will do in dividing the American people will almost certainly outweigh any good that it might accomplish. It is a mistake because, like the closer collaboration with Spain, it is an example of our tendency to associate ourselves with conservative forces merely because they are anti-Communist. It is a mistake because it takes the form of yielding to the pressure of political Catholicism in this country. It is a mistake to believe that closer official relations with the Vatican will help to coordinate 'the effort to combat the menace of communism,' since the uncritical opposition to essential social change on the part of many Roman Catholic authorities in the feudalistic countries is a major obstacle to an effective strategy against communism.

"However, we feel compelled to say that we consider it a disturbing fact of our church life that it takes an issue of this kind to arouse the whole of American Protestantism into such spontaneous indignation. In this time of the gravest perils to the free world American Protestantism is in danger of spending its energies on an issue less important than such fateful moral issues as aid to underdevolped nations, the strengthening of international cooperation through the United Nations and the development of constructive programs as an alternative to communism. Our concern is that American Protestantism avoid the tendency to engage in a 'one-issue' crusade which creates moral confusion."

Herman F. Reissig.

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA. Three young couples, students working at the University of California for their master's degrees, have moved into a part of Berkeley where Negroes are in a considerable majority. There are a number of eight-unit apartment houses in which only one or two families are white.

Since often when Negroes take the initiative in moving into all-white areas, race riots result, these young people decided that the only constructive line of action would be to reverse the method. For more than a year they have been living their race equality principles in this way, their small children playing happily with all the other children in the vicinity.

Others may find this a practical contribution toward breaking down segregation.

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MOLINE, ILLINOIS. The Reverend Carl H. Anderson, pastor of Gordon Memorial Congregational Church, reports the successful protest of laymen on the number of taverns and opening hours Sunday mornings. The action of seventy men at a church meeting, as well as protests by many individuals, secured a reversal of the action of the supervisors of Rock Island County. The names and telephone numbers of supervisors to be called was printed in the County Church News. As a result the number of tavern licenses was reduced to thirty, and the hour of opening moved back from 8 a. m. on Sunday to 1 p. m.

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COLUMBUS, OHIO. The Reverend Alan C. Herman, chairman of the social action committee of the Ohio Conference of Congregational Christian Churches, reports the following plans of his committee for the current year.

"One, we have explored the possibility and will probably establish a Credit Union for the churches here in Columbus before the end of the year.

"Two, we are suggesting and planning a seminar study of the Columbus community in connection with the Council's School of Religion held in January. Considerable thought and planning has been given to areas as described by Colcord in her book, *Your Community*. Housing, family welfare, child care and recreation have been considered most seriously.

"Three, an intensive study of the draft statement (Christian Action for a World in Crisis) will be made during our second meeting in January and February. As it has been agreed that we shall come prepared to discuss areas 1 and 2 in January and area 3 in February, this will enable us to forward to you the minutes of our study and criticism before March 1."

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MAYWOOD, ILLINOIS. Miss Gwendolyn Jeffers, recent graduate of Elmhurst College, Elmhurst, Illinois, is the first Negro to teach in the Maywood public schools. During the course of her work at Elmhurst, she carried on her required student teaching in Maywood and so impressed the school authorities of this Chicago suburb that she received the appointment. Miss Jeffers hails from Cleveland and first became interested in Elmhurst through the Evangelical and Reformed Church's race relations program.

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COLUMBUS, OHIO. Church leaders, including Bishop Hazen G. Werner, Methodist, and Roman Catholic spokesmen are among those who have publicly criticized the recent "gag rule" invoked at Ohio State University. According to action of the University Board of Trustees, no outside speaker may appear on the campus without the approval of President Howard Bevis. Although subsequently modified to permit professors to bring guest lecturers into their classrooms, the rule is still the target of groups concerned with academic freedom. Significantly, the first person barred by application of the rule was Cecil Hinshaw, prominent British Quaker. University officials refused to explain on what grounds he was excluded.

CHURCHES WELCOME STATEMENT

Recent letters indicate the excellent response of the churches to the study of the draft statement, *Christian Action for a World in Crisis.*

Writes the Reverend John H. Gregg, D. D., pastor of the First Congregational Church of Fresno, California:

"You will be interested in knowing that I plan to read this statement in its entirety on Sunday morning, November 25, at our duplicate services of worship. At the close of our services we plan to give copies to each family present in order that they may study the statement prior to the afternoon and evening meeting which we will hold on December 12 to formulate our constructive suggestions, criticisms and additions."

The Reverend Philip Steinmetz of Ashfield, Mass., says:

"I'm chairman of the Committee on Social Action of Franklin Association. We had a meeting of the committee today and decided to try to get something done in each of our 31 churches about studying the statement 'Christian Action for a World in Crisis.' May I have 35 copies of the statement for distribution to the various churches. We aim to make a personal visit on each pastor, dividing them up among the members of the committee and trying to get them going on some study. No doubt each one has received a copy of the statement and no doubt many of them have lost it! We wish to have a copy to leave after our visit."

More than 350 churches have formed groups to study the statement.

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SPEAKING OF BOOKS

(Continued from Page 2, Col. 3)

Part IV, "Sociological Trends in Contemporary Catholic Economic, Political and Legal Thought"; Part V, "Some Catholic Applications of Sociological Theory to the Study of Social Groups and Social Problems"; and Part VI, "Conclusion: Retrospect and Prospect". The book impresses the reader with the wealth of Catholic thought on social subjects and the effort to achieve a synthesis of social data within the framework of the Catholic philosophy of society. The book deserves a place in every scholar's library. R. G.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Additional copies may be obtained for 2 cents each. Requests from Congregational Christians should be addressed to Ray Gibbons, Director, Council for Social Action, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York. Requests by Evangelical and Reformed, and others, as well as news items and communications, should be addressed to the Editor, Huber F. Klemme, Commission on Christian Social Action, 2969 West 25th Street, Cleveland 13, Ohio